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ABSTRACT

This report evaluates the special education component of the 1986-87 Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention program of the New York City Board of Education. The program was designed to provide intensive services to special education students at risk of dropping out of school. The report presents characteristics of students in the program, examines the degree to which the program guidelines were implemented, analyzes attendance and academic improvement of student participants, and presents conclusions and recommendations. Students selected for the program had excessive absence, low reading level, health problems, or behavior problems. Program services for the 2,333 students in 43 middle schools and citywide sites included a facilitation component to monitor attendance and provide referrals to community agencies; an attendance outreach component to contact parents concerning their children's progress; a guidance/counseling component; a health component; a school linkages component to provide high-school orientations; and an alternative education component to provide work/study experiences, jobs, and life skills training. Staffing consisted of guidance counselors, social workers, teacher trainers, and family workers. Overall, 38 percent of the students improved their attendance; 57 percent of students who failed at least one subject in the previous year showed improvement the following year. (JDD)

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ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT
AND DROPOUT PREVENTION (A.I./D.P.)
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
1986-1987
END OF THE YEAR REPORT

OEA Evaluation Report

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October, 1987

ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AND DROPOUT PREVENTION (A.I./D.P.) SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM 1986-1987 END OF THE YEAR REPORT

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ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AND DROPOUT PREVENTION (A.I./D.P.) SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM 1986-87

SUMMARY

In this report the Office of Educational Assessment (O.E.A.) evaluates the 1986-87 Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) program which was designed to provide intensive services to intermediate, junior high school and Citywide special education students identified as at risk of dropping out of school. The program operated at 43 sites in five special education regions and the Citywide services unit. The 1986-87 academic year marked the third year of the program's operation.

The report presents the characteristics of students in the program; examines the degree to which the program guidelines were implemented; analyzes attendance and academic improvement of student participants; and presents conclusions and recommendations. O.E.A. gathered data from student records and conducted interviews with all professional A.I./D.P. staff and two family workers in each region.

This is one of three reports prepared by O.E.A. evaluating the implementation of A.I./D.P. programs throughout the New York City school system. The other two reports are: "Middle School Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) Program 1986-87" and "High School Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) Program 1986-87 End of Year Report."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The A.I./D.P. program provided services to 2,333 students with learning disabilities or behavior problems in 43 targeted middle schools and Citywide sites. Excessive absence was cited for 66.5 percent of the students as a reason for selection. Among the non-attendance-related reasons, the most frequently cited was low reading level. Forty-five percent of all students were selected because they were two or more years below grade level in reading. Other students were eligible because of health or behavior problems.

The average age of participating students was 14.2 years; the average number of days absent in the previous year was 42.3.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program Requirements

The Chancellor's guidelines established the minimum requirements for services and set limits on the personnel and resources on which funds could be spent. The basic minimum complement of services included: a facilitation component to monitor attendance and provide referrals to community agencies; an attendance outreach component to contact parents concerning the progress of their children; a guidance and counseling component to provide services for parents and students; a health component to review students' needs and provide appropriate referrals; a school linkages component to provide high school orientations; and an alternative education component to provide work/study experiences, jobs (where possible) and the Adkins Life Skills Training.

Component Implementation

A.I./D.P. staff considered the special needs of program participants on an individual basis and the availability of human resources when making service delivery decisions. They provided all six service components in each region but varied the frequency of services provided. This practice was consistent with the program mandate.

Staffing was also consistent with the program guidelines. In all but one of the special education regions there was at least one guidance counselor or social worker, a teacher trainer, and an average of six family workers. (In the exception region, neither a guidance counselor nor a social worker was present the entire year. This factor was a consequence of system-wide personnel demands beyond the control of the A.I./D.P. program.)

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The Chancellor's Special Circular Number 25 (May 21, 1986) established performance objectives for all 1986-87 A.I./D.P. programs. Of these, the following objectives apply to the special education program:

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will have higher attendance in 1986-87 than in 1985-86.

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will pass at least one more subject in 1986-87 than they did in 1985-86. (This applies only to participating students

who failed one or more subjects during the previous year.)

Change in Attendance

Overall, 38 percent of A.I./D.P. students entering the program by October 1986 improved their attendance from 1985-86 to 1986-87. The mean change in percent of days attended from 1985-86 to 1986-87 was -7.0 percentage points. Two out of the five regions and Citywide in effect met the Chancellor's 50 percent attendance improvement criterion (49.4 and 54.2 percent).

The service combinations which were the most effective in improving attendance were the provision of all service components without exception (42.2 percent improvement) and the provision of all service components except school linkages (37.7 percent improvement). About 680 students left the program before the end of the academic year. Of these, 53 percent were reported to have left either because they completed the program, changed schools were discharged or listed as L.T.A.

Change in Subjects Passed

Over 57 percent of A.I./D.P. students who failed at least one subject in the previous year and for whom there were complete achievement data showed improvement in the proportion of subjects passed in 1986-87 compared to 1985-86. This result was above the 50 percent criterion set by the Chancellor for academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above outcomes and additional feedback collected from program staff, recommendations for A.I./D.P. services to special education students are:

- Particular attention should continue to be paid to the way that students' handicaps affect their attendance patterns so that appropriate interventions can be made to meet their special needs.

- Incorporate the unique features of the special education A.I./D.P. program (such as the family worker's level of activity providing facilitating and attendance outreach services) in the general education A.I./D.P. program now that the special education students fall within their purview.

- If funds permits expand the facilitator role to a full-time position.

- Emphasize alternative special education and high school preparation, especially vocational and technical education.

- Expand efforts to involve the parents of A.I./D.P. students in program activities and to increase their skills so that they can more effectively encourage their children to increase their attendance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Background	1
	Description	2
II.	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	7
	Sample	7
	Instrumentation	7
	Data Collection	8
	Data Analysis	8
III.	FINDINGS	10
	Implementation	10
	Outcomes	26
IV.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	35

LIST OF TABLES

		PAGE
Table 1:	A.I./D.P. Staff Activities by Service Component .	12
Table 2:	Participants' Age, Previous Attendance, and Subjects Passed, by Staff Team.	16
Table 3:	Reasons for Selecting Students to Participate in the A.I./D.P. Special Education Program. . . .	17
Table 4:	Percent of Participants Receiving Program Services.	20
Table 5:	Mean Frequency of Services Received, by Staff Team.	23
Table 6:	Participant Attendance Improvement, by Staff Team.	27
Table 7:	Participant Attendance Improvement in 1986-87, by Absence in 1985-86.	30
Table 8:	Reasons for Exiting Program, by Staff Team. . . .	33

I. INTRODUCTION

The Office of Educational Assessment (O.E.A.) conducted an evaluation of the 1986-87 Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) program, funded jointly by New York State and New York City, and implemented by the Division of Special Education (D.S.E.) of the New York City Public Schools. The program was designed to provide intensive services to Citywide, intermediate, and junior high school level special education students identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

BACKGROUND

In March 1984, the New York State Legislature passed Education Law 1302, subdivision 25, in an effort to address the problem of the high student drop-out rate. (The United States Department of Education reported that nationally since 1985, one out of every four students dropped out of high school before graduating.) In May of 1984, the Board of Regents adopted Commissioner's Regulation 175.23 which established procedures for the allocation of funds to designated school districts. Amendments in this regulation were made in May 1985 and June 1986.

D.S.E. received 1.4 million dollars to provide services to special education students in intermediate and junior high schools and the Citywide unit who exhibited attendance rates below the citywide median. D.S.E. identified students attending Modified Instructional Services (MIS) I and II classes in regional programs and those in Special Instructional Environments

(SIE) IV, VII, and VIII classes in Citywide Services as the target population. These students historically have had the poorest attendance record among special education students. Funds were divided among the five special education regions and the Citywide Services Unit.

A.I./D.P. special education began in 1984; 1986-87 was its third and last year as a fully centralized operation. The program ended because of a Board of Education decision to decentralize special education regional programs. Consequently, plans were made for the operation of the A.I./D.P. program to be shifted from D.S.E. to community school districts, and the responsibility for all but the Citywide, low-incidence A.I./D.P. special education students was to be shifted to the general education A.I./D.P. program for middle schools.

DESCRIPTION

Objectives

The Chancellor's Special Circular Number 25 (May 21, 1986) established performance objectives for all 1986-87 A.I.D.P. programs. Of these, the following objectives apply to the special education program:

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will have higher attendance in 1986-87 than in 1985-86.
- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will pass at least one more subject in 1986-87 than they did in 1985-86. (This applies only to participating students who failed one or more subjects during the previous year.)

Thus, the mandate of D.S.E. was to design and implement a program which would improve participating students' attendance and achievement.

Service Components

The Chancellor's circular also stipulated that the program include the following six service components: facilitating services, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, school-level linkages, and alternative education. However, the requirements were sufficiently flexible to allow site and regional personnel to adapt each service to local needs.

In facilitating services, staff were to monitor students' attendance and academic progress by reviewing their records and consulting with school personnel who worked with them. Based on this information, program staff determined the type and intensity of services required by each student.

In attendance outreach services, staff were to encourage students to improve their attendance by maintaining contact with parents by mail, telephone, and home visits.

In guidance and counseling services, staff were to provide individual, group, and family counseling to those who needed these services and were not receiving them on a mandated basis.

In health services, staff were to review participants' health needs and refer students to the appropriate health and other related service professionals.

School-linkage services were to promote a smooth transition for students from junior high school to high school. This service component included high school articulation activities, arranging for students to visit a variety of high schools, and attend high school day assemblies.

Alternative education services were designed to heighten students' interest in school by improving their vocational and work-readiness skills. This service component included work/study programs, career days, and the Adkins Life Skills program.

Proposed Organization

The program design stipulated that A.I./D.P was to be centrally coordinated, and the actual administration was to be delegated to the regions: Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn West, Brooklyn East/Staten Island*, Queens, and the Citywide Services Unit (C.S.U.). Within each region, a member of the regional administrative staff was to be assigned overall responsibility for the program. The day-to-day administration was to be the responsibility of a full-time A.I./D.P. staff member who would be designated as the facilitator of the program, and would perform both administrative and service-delivery functions.

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*Although Staten Island is not a separate A.I./D.P. special education region, the program did propose the assignment of a separate partial staff team to it. Thus, in total, A.I./D.P. was to operate in five special education regions and the Citywide service unit and was to be implemented by a total of seven staff teams.

The program was slated to begin the 1986-87 activities in September, and would operate at 43 targeted middle schools and Citywide sites which exhibited attendance rates below the citywide median.

Generally, the program stipulated that each staff team would consist of a guidance counselor or social worker, a teacher trainer, and an average of six family workers. In addition, each A.I./D.P. staff team would have one or two office aides to perform clerical and administrative work. Each of these teams was to serve students in an average of seven schools.

Student Selection Criteria

The Chancellor's circular and the A.I./D.P. program design stated that the following criteria should be used to select participants. Students would be considered eligible to participate if they were in grades eight and nine in junior high schools or grades seven and eight in intermediate schools and:

1. had 30 to 74 absences in the 1985-1986 school year;
2. had 15 absences or more for spring 1986;
3. had 25-29 absences and one of the following high-risk indicators for the 1985-86 school year:

   a. reading one-or-more years below grade level;
   b. two or more major subject failures;
   c. 20 or more incidents of lateness;
   d. 20 or more half-day absences;
   e. over-age;
   f. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) entitled;

4. had participated in the 1985-86 A.I./D.P. program but were no longer eligible because of improved attendance.

* If there were still openings available, grade seven junior high school students could be selected, applying the above criteria in order of presentation.

- If there were still openings available after October 31, 1986, students in grades eight and nine would also be eligible if they:

  1. were Long Term Absent (LTA) in the 1985-86 school year but had ten or more days of attendance between September 8, 1986 and October 31, 1986;

  2. had ten or more absences between September 8, 1986 and October 31, 1986, but were not LTAs in 1985-86.

REPORT FORMAT

This report examines the third and last year of A.I./D.P. as a fully-centralized special education program. Chapter II describes evaluation objectives, methodology, and analytic procedures; Chapter III discusses program implementation, characteristics of participating students, and program outcomes; and Chapter IV provides conclusions and recommendations.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The O.E.A. evaluation of the 1986-87 A.I./D.P. program examined the extent to which participating students' attendance and academic performance improved. The evaluation also focused on program implementation including service delivery, and characteristics of participating students. O.E.A. gathered data from two sources: student records and staff interviews.

SAMPLE

O.E.A. collected data on attendance, academic performance and student demographics for all students (N = 2,333) who participated in the program during the 1986-87 academic year. Similarly, O.E.A. gathered information on program operations through interviews with all 18 on-site professional A.I./D.P. staff members and two family workers out of an average of six from each region.

INSTRUMENTATION

O.E.A. designed a data retrieval form to obtain information on student background, attendance, grades, reasons for referral to the program and services provided. On a staff interview schedule, O.E.A. recorded information on the organization of the program, the staff member's role, the percentage of time spent on tasks, the type of students served, and anecdotal information about students, their families and school situations.

DATA COLLECTION

During the year, the program staff filled out a monthly monitoring form to help them keep accurate records on the attendance and academic progress of individual students. In May, they transferred this information to the O.E.A.-developed data retrieval forms and returned them to O.E.A. for analysis. In addition, O.E.A. conducted interviews with A.I./D.P. staff in April and May.

DATA ANALYSIS

O.E.A. analyzed the data to determine if the program met its attendance and academic achievement objectives, and to assess the level and quality of program implementation. Data analysis proceeded as follows:

- Implementation data were tallied by staff team and personnel type in order to provide a description of the program organization.
- Student background characteristics (including age, previous years' attendance*, level of academic performance, and reasons for referral) were aggregated by region, and by level of service.
- Students' attendance improvement was calculated and presented by staff team, level of service, previous years' absences, level of services provided, and by differences in students' program starting dates.
- For participants who entered the program prior to October 1986, their attendance in 1986-87 was compared to that of 1985-86. For those who participated less than the full year, their attendance for two months prior to program entry was compared to that of two months after entry.

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*O.E.A. computed the percentage of time a student attended school (the total number of days the student attended was divided by the total number of days absent plus number of days present).

- The percentage of A.I./D.P. students improving in academic performance was calculated for the entire group and by staff team. O.E.A. operationally defined the Chancellor's criteria for academic performance, that is, the number of subjects passed, as the proportion of subjects passed in 1986-87 compared to 1985-86.

- The relationship between student characteristics, services received, and attendance improvement was explored by crosstabulating previous years' attendance, services, and attendance improvement.

III. FINDINGS

IMPLEMENTATION

Organization

Staff. At Central Office, A.I./D.P. was staffed by a program administrator and a coordinator who were assisted by an office associate and health aide. At the regions and the Citywide unit, A.I./D.P. was staffed by six full and one partial staff teams. Each had at least one guidance counselor or social worker; four had two teacher trainers, the other three had one. All staff teams had between five and nine family workers (one was the exception with only two), and all staff teams had either one or two office aides. The role of facilitator was carried out by a teacher trainer on four staff teams, by a social worker on two staff teams and by a guidance counselor on one staff team. Finally, each DAS assigned a member of his staff to serve as the regional liaison to each A.I./D.P. team.

In total, the A.I./D.P. program had a staff of one administrator, one coordinator, three guidance counselors, five social workers, 11 teacher trainers, 42 family workers, 12 office aides, one office associate and one health aide. Program staffing was consistent with service component requirements, except for one region which had neither a social worker nor a guidance counsellor present the entire year. This factor was a consequence of system-wide personnel demands beyond the control of the A.I./D.P. program.

Staff Activities. Table 1 describes the average amount of time each category of staff members dedicated to the six service components. A social worker, teacher trainer, or guidance counselor on each staff team acted as a program facilitator. Staff members in this role devoted more than fifty percent of their time to facilitating services. The remaining time they spent on the other five service components in close to equal proportions. Guidance counselors and social workers dedicated the majority of their time to guidance and counseling (40 percent) and alternative education (20 percent). Teacher trainers worked predominantly on alternative education services (56 percent) and school linkages (24 percent). Family workers spent almost all their time on attendance outreach (72 percent) and facilitating services (15 percent). All four types of staff members devoted very little time to health services, due to the fact that the central office health aide was almost exclusively responsible for implementing this component.

Inter-Staff Coordination and Communication

O.E.A. interviewed A.I./D.P. staff regarding their contacts with the special education and general education staffs at the site schools.

Facilitators reported that principals of the host schools were generally cooperative with program staff. Their support involved inviting special education A.I./D.P. students to participate in awards assemblies and schoolwide activities such

TABLE 1

A.I./D.P. Staff Activities by Service Component
(In Percent)[a]

Services	Percent of Time		
	Guidance Counselor/ Social Workers	Teacher Trainers	Family Workers
Facilitating Services	12.0	13.0	15.0
Attendance Outreach	10.0	2.0	72.0
Guidance and Counseling	40.0	4.0	6.0
Health	2.0	2.0	2.0
School Linkages	15.0	24.0	3.0
Alternative Education	20.0	56.0	0.0
Other	2.0	0.0	2.0

Source: O.E.A. staff interviews.

[a]Total percentages range from 99 to 101 because of rounding.

- A.I./D.P. staff spent the majority of their time in role-specific activities consistent with program guidelines.

as black history celebrations, joint special education and regular education trips, parent workshops, and high school linkage activities.

Interaction with General Education A.I./D.P. Staff. Although A.I./D.P. staff located the special education programs at general education sites, coordination between special education and general education A.I./D.P. staff was not uniformly successful. Many facilitators reported that they were unable to arrange for joint activities with general education A.I./D.P. staff. The lack of free time was cited as the major barrier to effective interaction between A.I./D.P. staff and special education personnel, and A.I./D.P. staff and general education A.I./D.P. personnel. Program staff reported the need to include regular and special education and A.I./D.P. personnel in joint planning.

Interaction with Special Education School Staff. All A.I./D.P. professional staff had regular contact with school special education staff. They consulted classroom teachers frequently and in some instances on a daily basis. Site supervisors, assistant principals, and crisis intervention teachers were also consulted on a regular basis. Discussions included reviewing individual participants' progress, as well as planning such activities as trips, career days, and high school fairs.

In some instances A.I./D.P. staff reported that their work was hindered by school staff. Some teacher trainers reported

that special education supervisors were reluctant to cooperate in implementing work-study programs. These supervisors were often hesitant to allow students to leave the building during school hours. Work-study programs were in some instances halted because of this.

Occasionally, classroom teachers did not participate in the activities presented by the teacher trainer. Some teachers left the classroom instead of listening to the lesson so that they could prepare follow-up activities for their students.

Student Selection Criteria

Process of Selection. D.S.E. defined procedures and criteria for the identification of program participants in targeted middle schools. D.S.E. selected students predominantly from MIS II classes, but also from MIS I, SIE IV, VII, and VIII, according to the following procedures. A.I./D.P staff in consultation with special education classroom teachers reviewed attendance and academic information (including cumulative record cards, individual education plans, medical histories, and previous correspondence with the students' parents or guardians). Teachers prepared a list of pupils who appeared to demonstrate a high potential for truancy; they consulted with relevant special education support staff (e.g. S.B.S.T. members) to obtain additional information on the identified "high risk" students, and then prepared a brief attendance profile for all "high risk" students in their classes. Teachers forwarded this information

to their D.S.E. supervisors who, in turn, forwarded it to the A.I./D.P. staff team. Based on student attendance patterns and student needs in each school, the A.I./D.P. staff selected candidates who would benefit from program services.

Student Characteristics. Using the above procedure, the A.I./D.P. staff selected the 2,333 students who participated in the A.I./D.P. program during 1986-87. Tables 2 and 3 present student background characteristics, including: the average age of A.I./D.P. participants during the program year, attendance and achievement information for the year prior to their participation, and the reasons they were referred to the program. Data is reported for the full program as well as for each staff team.

The majority of the participants (1,864) entered the program by October. A smaller group was added to the program during the school year (469).

Age. The average age of A.I./D.P. participants was between 13.2 years and 14.0 for six out of the seven staff teams. The exception was staff team G with an average age of 16.0. Overall, the average age of A.I./D.P. participants was 14.2. This figure is clearly higher than the expected age of students in intermediate or junior high schools, which ranges between 11 and 15 years with a mean of 13. This finding confirms that the A.I./D.P. program selection criteria generally adhered to the Chancellor's requirements for eligibility with regard to age.

Attendance. The average number of days that students were

TABLE 2

Participants' Age, Previous Attendance, and Subjects Passed by Staff Teams[a]

Staff Teams[b]	Average Age in 1985-86[c]	S.D.	Days Absent, 1985-86 Average Number	S.D.	Percent[d]	Subjects Passed, 1985-86 Average Number[e]	S.D.	Percent[f]
A	14.0 (398)	1.3	38.9 (322)	34.4	21.9 (322)	5.1 (316)	2.5	74.2 (316)
B	13.9 (385)	3.8	45.2 (366)	27.2	24.9 (366)	4.8 (318)	2.7	72.1 (313)
C	13.7 (356)	2.1	40.8 (316)	25.2 (316)	22.2	3.7 (291)	1.9	73.9 (289)
D	14.0 (253)	0.9	48.1 (243)	29.6 (243)	26.7	3.5 (188)	2.5	61.8 (187)
E	13.7 (390)	1.5	37.6 (328)	28.4 (328)	26.9	4.5 (299)	2.6	67.6 (299)
F	13.2 (142)	1.2	34.8 (142)	22.0 (142)	18.6	5.0 (133)	2.2	71.1 (133)
G	16.0 (379)	2.3	50.9 (260)	37.8 (260)	31.1	3.4 (161)	2.7	57.2 (161)
TOTAL	14.2 (2,303)		42.3 (1,977)			4.4 (1,705)		

Source: Student I.E.P.s and cumulative records.

[a]Based on number of students reported from by staff team in 1986-87. Because of missing data entries, not all students are reported for each variable.

[b]The A.I./D.P. program was implemented by seven staff teams located in five special education regions and the Citywide unit. Data is reported for each team.

[c]Average age in January, 1987.

[d]Based on number of days absent divided by number of days absent plus number of days present.

[e]Based on the 71 percent of students reported to have taken from one to 11 subjects. This analysis did not include students for whom subjects passed or failed were not reported (27 percent), students who were reported to have passed or failed more than 11 subjects (one percent), or students who were reported to have passed or failed no subjects (less than one percent).

[f]Based on the number of subjects individual students passed, divided by the number of subjects passed and failed in the 1985-86 year.

- Students were generally overage for middle schools.
- Students had been absent notably more than the 30-day absence set by the Chancellor as the program eligibility criterion.
- Students had failed more than 30 percent of their subjects.

TABLE 3

"At-Risk" Characteristics of Students who Participated in the A.I./D.P. Special Education Program (N = 2,326)[a]

At-Risk Characteristics	Students Served	
	Number[b]	Percent of Total N
Attendance		
Excessive absence	1,546	66.5
Erratic attendance	1,475	63.4
Tardiness	1,035	44.5
Cutting classes	704	30.3
Other	127	5.5
Other Reasons		
Two or more years below grade level in reading	1,051	45.2
Course failure	616	26.5
Behavioral problems	720	31.0
Health problems	149	6.4
Overage	9	0.4
LEP	113	4.9
Other	38	1.6

Source: Teacher reports as recorded on student data retrieval forms.

[a]Based on number of referred students whose characteristics were reported.

[b]Referred students who had more than one characteristic.

- Over 66 percent of the participants had excessive absences -- the most frequently cited characteristic.
- Over 45 percent of the participants had below-grade reading levels -- the most frequently cited non-attendance-related characteristic.

absent in the year prior to their participation in A.I./D.P. ranged from 34.8 (about 19 percent) to 50.9 (about 31 percent) in the seven regions.

The overall average number of days absent for all A.I./D.P. students in the year prior to the program was 42.3 days (or 23.8 percent), notably higher than the Chancellor's attendance criteria for eligibility of at least 30 days absent in the previous year.

Subjects Passed. O.E.A. limited its analysis to students who were reported to have taken between one and eleven subjects. Table 2 presents data on the number of subjects passed by these students. Among the seven staff teams, the average number of subjects passed by students ranged from 3.4 to 5.1. For five out of the seven staff teams, the percent of subjects passed by students ranged between 67.6 and 74.2 percent with staff team A reporting the highest level. Staff teams D and G deviated noticeably from the pattern, reporting the lowest percentage of subjects passed of 61.8 and 57.2 percent respectively. Overall, participants passed only 69.4 percent of their subjects in the year prior to their participation in the A.I./D.P. program. Thus, on the average they failed 30.6 percent of their subjects. Given that the average number of subjects taken by these A.I./D.P. students was 6.3, they failed an average of over 1.9 subjects. In effect, these figures show that participants met the Chancellor's criteria for academic achievement which require the failure of two subjects in the year prior to A.I./D.P.

participation.

In order to develop a more complete profile of the participants in the A.I./D.P. program, O.E.A. elicited staff comments about students' non-academic problems. In all regions, staff reported that between 46 and 65 percent of all students experienced family problems, and between 29 and 82 percent emotional problems. Students with other problems such as pregnancy, substance abuse, or homelessness were more likely to have stopped attending school altogether.

Table 3 shows the at-risk characteristics of A.I./D.P. participants. The most frequently cited characteristic was excessive absence. Sixty-six percent of the students were cited for excessive absence and 63.4 percent of the students were cited for erratic attendance. Tardiness was a characteristic of 44.5 percent of the students. Among the non-attendance-related characteristics the most frequently cited was reading deficiency: forty-five percent of the A.I./D.P. students were two years or more below grade level in reading. In analyzing characteristics of referred students, O.E.A. found that 85 percent had at least two of the characteristics cited in the Chancellor's guidelines.

Services Provided

Table 4 presents data on the percentage of students who received each of the six program service components.

Facilitating Services. A.I./D.P. staff monitored the attendance of 98 percent of the participants. They also

TABLE 4

Percent of participants Receiving Program Services
(N = 2,333)[a]

Services Received	Participants Served	
	Number[a]	Percent[b]
FACILITATING SERVICES		
Monitored attendance	2,277	97.6
Outreach to community agencies	600	25.7
Meetings with school staff	2,260	96.9
ATTENDANCE OUTREACH		
Home visits	2,104	90.2
Personal phone contacts	1,855	79.5
Robot phone	355	15.2
Mail contact	1,837	78.7
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING		
Counseling sessions	1,632	70.0
Parent participation	572	24.5
HEALTH		
Records reviewed	2,280	97.7
Linkage with health professionals	2,199	94.3
SCHOOL LINKAGES		
Articulation (planning)	871	37.3
Visit high schools	636	27.3
Listen to high school speakers	1,036	44.4
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION		
Adkins Life Skills	2,299	98.5
Career speakers	1,682	72.1
Career days	1,485	63.7
Field trips	1,698	72.8
Career education activities	2,253	96.6

Source: O.E.A.-developed student data retrieval forms.

[a]Total number of students for whom data on services were available.

[b]Because students generally received more than one service, column totals more than 100 percent.

- Facilitating services, attendance outreach, health services, and alternative education activities were the most frequently reported program services, provided to over 90 percent of all participants.

interacted with school staff regarding 97 percent of A.I./D.P. participants. These data demonstrate that A.I./D.P. staff provided the essential services under this component to nearly all A.I./D.P. participants.

Attendance Outreach. Although A.I./D.P. staff offered four services under this component, the primary service they provided was home visits. A.I./D.P. staff visited the homes of 90 percent of program participants. Additionally, they contacted the families of about 79 percent of participants by phone or mail, and 15 percent by robot phone. Thus the data indicate that the A.I./D.P. staff established direct and personal contact with a large majority of program participants.

Guidance and Counseling. A.I./D.P. staff provided counseling to 70 percent of participating students; 25 percent of the counseling entailed parental participation. It is important to note that other A.I./D.P. students were already receiving mandated counseling. Therefore, the total percent of students receiving counseling was considerably higher than 70 percent.

Health. A.I./D.P. staff reviewed the health records of nearly 98 percent of participating students, and provided linkage to health professionals for over 94 percent of the students. Thus A.I./D.P. staff assessed almost all students' health needs. Note the very high percent of students with attendance problems who had health needs, reflected by the very high rate of health linkages provided by the program. A visible relationship appears to exist between unmet health needs and school attendance among

the program participants.

School Linkages. The rate of service delivery in this component was noticeably lower than that of other service components. Approximately 27 percent of the students visited high schools. Thirty-seven percent of the participants received articulation services, and 44 percent listened to speakers representing various high schools. The reason for this lower service rate is that the majority of A.I./D.P. students were in lower grades and consequently not ready to make plans for entering high school.

Alternative Education. A.I./D.P. staff heavily emphasized these services. They provided the Adkins Life Skills program to over 98 percent of the students, and career education activities to over 96 percent. In addition over 63 percent of the participants received more than one alternative education activity. These high percentages reflect the importance that program staff placed on career and vocational activities that would lead to school retention, jobs, and future income-earning power.

Table 5 presents the average number of services provided in 1986-87 to each student for each staff team. Averages varied widely. In the facilitating services component, staff team F had the highest average (209.4), staff team A had the lowest (134); the overall average was 164.6. Given that there were 166 school days in 1986-87 for which program service data were collected, and that an essential activity of this component was the frequent

TABLE 5

Mean Frequency of Services Received, by Staff Team[a]

Staff Team[b]	N[c]	SERVICES											
		Facilitating Services[d]	S.D.	Attendance Outreach[e]	S.D.	Counseling[f]	S.D.	Health[g]	S.D.	School Linkages[h]	S.D	Alternative Education[i]	S.D.
A	403	134.0	46.2	29.5	19.7	5.4	4.0	2.0	75.8	9.7	10.2	14.0	10.5
B	390	154.1	47.8	15.4	11.3	12.9	9.1	2.2	40.2	3.3	4.9	6.5	3.1
C	366	198.1	68.3	15.4	12.2	6.0	7.8	1.9	45.4	2.8	3.7	9.9	4.2
D	255	168.5	2.2	21.8	14.8	2.8	2.6	2.0	67.2	5.0	3.9	6.3	4.2
E	292	145.2	59.5	45.8	44.3	0.1	1.9	3.0	28.1	3.2	4.6	9.1	2.3
F	148	209.4	20.5	41.7	38.9	18.4	11.7	2.4	4.9	2.7	5.6	6.6	1.8
G	379	175.6	17.8	12.2	9.2	20.8	27.4	2.3	63.1	0.4	2.1	6.5	3.2
TOTAL	2,333	164.6		24.8		8.9		2.2		4.0		8.7	

Source: Student data retrieval forms.

[a]Mean number of interventions per student during 1986-87.

[b]The A.I./D.P. program was implemented by seven staff teams located in five special education regions and the Citywide unit. Data is reported here for each team.

[c]N Refers to the number of students in each region who was reported as receiving any A.I./D.P. service at least once.

[d]Monitoring of student progress, review of records, communication with school personnel.

[e]Outreach to parents through mail and telephone contacts and home visits.

[f]Guidance/counseling sessions for students or their parents.

[g]Records reviewed; linkage with professionals as needed.

[h]Articulation activities; visiting high schools; high school speakers.

[i]Adkins Life Skills; career speakers; career days; field trips; career education/work-study.

- Facilitating services were the most frequently provided by all staff teams.

monitoring of students' attendance, the overall average number of services provided to each student was appropriate.

The average number of attendance outreach services provided ranged from 45.8 by staff team E to 12.2 by staff team G. Given that this component primarily involved home and telephone contact with parents, the variation may be due to differences in the needs of program participants being served by each of the staff teams.

Staff team G delivered the highest rate of counseling services: students received an average of 20.8 sessions per year. In contrast, staff team E provided almost no counseling. The low number of counseling sessions provided by this staff team was probably due to the lack of a guidance counselor or social worker. Health services did not differ significantly among teams. The average number of interventions was 2.3 per year for the teams.

School linkages ranged from less than one intervention by staff team G to 9.7 by staff team A. The remaining staff teams provided between 2.7 to 5.0 interventions. Staff team G's low number may be explained by the nature of this program. This staff team worked with schools which dealt exclusively with special education students who did not have the same selection of high school placements available to them as students in the other district schools. Staff team A had the highest number of alternative education services. The remaining staff teams provided between 6.5 and 9.9 interventions per student.

Based on these figures, it is apparent that staff team A provided more school linkages and alternative education services over the other four services. Of the six program components, O.E.A. found these two services to be the most highly correlated with attendance improvement in the 1986-87 program evaluation. Staff team E, which had the highest proportion of family workers to program sites (six family workers to four sites), provided the highest number of attendance outreach services. Staff team G, which had two full-time mental health professionals, offered the most counseling. These results suggest that A.I./D.P. program staff considered a number of factors when making service delivery decisions, among them were the needs of participants and the availability of staff resources.

Problems in Service Delivery. O.E.A. interviewed staff to investigate the kinds of problems they encountered in providing services. Problems varied according to role. Facilitators reported some difficulty in obtaining program funds in a timely fashion, and in juggling the demands of a dual role.

Teacher trainers reported lack of cooperation on the part of school personnel in implementing work/study programs due to a perceived fear of innovation and their reluctance to allow students to leave the building during school hours. Teacher trainers also reported that some classroom teachers did not participate in the Adkins life skills class, and did not integrate career lessons into the ongoing curriculum.

Guidance counselors and social workers described problems

with large caseloads; lack of appropriate office settings to conduct counseling; teachers who were reluctant to release students from classroom instruction; difficulty finding the A.I./D.P. students in the school if the family worker was not present; and students absent on the day of their counseling session.

OUTCOMES

Attendance

The Chancellor's objective for attendance improvement was that 50 percent of participants improve their attendance between 1985-86 and 1986-87.

Table 6 presents attendance improvement data by staff team for all students who began the A.I./D.P. program by October 1986. The students who received services from staff teams B and F, in effect, met the Chancellor's objective with improvements in attendance of 49.4 percent and 54.2 percent; students who received services from staff team A showed the lowest rate of improvement (25.7 percent).

The total percentage of students who improved their attendance was 38 percent. Although this finding did not meet the Chancellor's objective, it is important to point out that the A.I./D.P. program attendance outcome for 1986-87 was higher than the 34.5 percent increase of 1985-86. It is also important to note that the analysis of the 1986-87 program data included all participants, while the analysis of the 1985-86 program included

TABLE 6

Participant Attendance Improvement, by Staff Team[a]

Staff Team[b]	N[c]	Percent of Participants Who Improved
A	245	25.7
B	261	49.4
C	289	36.3
D	218	45.0
E	363	31.9
F	131	54.2
G	108	27.4
TOTAL	1575	37.8

Source: Student daily classroom attendance records and cumulative record cards.

[a]O.E.A. has operationally defined attendance improvement as an increase of at least one point in the percent of days present from 1985-86 to 1986-87. "Percent of days present" is the number of days present as a fraction of all days accounted for (days reported as either present or absent).

[b]The A.I./D.P. program was implemented by seven staff teams located in five special education regions and the Citywide unit. Data is reported here for each team.

[c]Total number of students who entered the program by October 1986.

- Students who received services from staff teams B and F in effect met the program criterion for attendance improvement.

only full-year program participants. Participants who either started the program late or discontinued the program before the end of the academic year were subjected to a different type of analysis. This procedure, in effect, excluded students who were more likely to exhibit poor attendance improvement rates. Nevertheless, two out of the five special education regions* met or surpassed the Chancellor's objective in 1986-87, (using a more conservative analytical methodology), whereas in 1985-86 not a single region attained that objective.

O.E.A. also examined the attendance of students who entered the program after the start of the school year. For these students, their attendance two months prior to entering the program was compared to their attendance two months after entering it. Overall, 38 percent of these students had a higher rate of attendance in the two months following the onset of program participation than they had shown prior to participation.

It should be noted, however, that the date of program entry affected attendance improvement. November/December entrants had the lowest attendance improvement (27 percent) compared to January/February and March/April entrants who had improvements of 53 percent and 47 percent, respectively.

A.I./D.P. staff reported that attendance tended to decline after major holidays. The lower attendance improvement of

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*Staff teams B and F were each responsible for a special education region; therefore the findings indicate that two out of the five special education regions met the Chancellor's attendance objective.

November/December entrants may reflect, the failure of many of these participants to return to school after the winter vacation.

Table 7 shows student attendance improvement in 1986-87 compared to the previous year's attendance. As mentioned above, overall, almost 38 percent of full-year students improved their attendance. Students with weaker attendance in 1985-86 were more likely to show improvement than those with better attendance. Over 48 percent of students absent 81 days or more in 1985-86 improved, while 19 percent of students with 0-20 absences improved. It should be noted that this group had fairly little room left for improvement (a ceiling effect). On the other hand, the group with 81 or more absences was more likely to show gains simply because it was an extremely low group to begin with (i.e., a regression effect). Even so, the tendency for students with poorer attendance to improve more was still evident.

O.E.A. analyzed data on services provided to identify the most common service combinations, and then compared the attendance improvement rates of each group receiving these service combinations. The four most commonly-provided service combinations and the corresponding rate of attendance improvement for each were: all components (42.2 percent); all components except school linkage services (37.7); all components except guidance (34.3 percent) and all components except guidance and school linkage services (26.2 percent). The first two service combinations were the most effective (all service components provided, and all components except school linkage services).

TABLE 7

Participants' Attendance Improvement in 1986-87
by Absence in 1985-86[a]

Days Absent 1985-86	Percent Who Improved	Percentage Base[b]
0 - 20	19.0	279
21 - 40	38.7	640
41 - 60	40.6	340
61 - 80	52.0	148
81 or more	48.4	153
Total	37.8	1,560

Source: Student daily classroom attendance records and cumulative record cards.

[a]O.E.A. has operationally defined attendance improvement as an increase of at least one point in the percent of days present from 1985-86 to 1986- 87. "Percent of days present" is the number of days present as a fraction of all days accounted for (days reported as either present or absent). Where days absent plus days present was less than 150, one percent equaled one day. Where days absent plus days present was greater than or equal to 150, one percent equaled two days.

[b]Total number of students who entered the program by October 1986.

- Monitored participants with more than 20 days absent in 1985-86 improved their attendance and met the program objectives.
- Participants receiving intensive services who were absent between 61-80 days in 1985-86 in effect met the program objective.

Student attendance improvement was the most limited when guidance counseling and school linkages were not provided.

Staff Perceptions of Factors Affecting Attendance. Staff identified a series of non-program factors which affected student attendance. The most frequently cited factors were the school climate; parental commitment to, and support of, A.I./D.P. staff efforts; and appropriate values on the part of the student.

The staff reported that school climate (which included the attitudes of teachers and other school personnel, curriculum, incentive awards, relationships with other students, class placement, and transportation) had a major influence on whether or not a student attended school. Students who felt unwelcome or out of place in addition to having other problems functioning in school were more likely to be truant. The staff's viewpoint regarding school climate was best summarized by the observation that the A.I./D.P. program can return a student to school -- but it cannot make a student stay.

According to program staff, students whose parents voiced concern over their attendance were more likely to benefit from the program than children whose parents took no active role in returning their children to school or who were hostile to A.I./D.P. staff when they conducted home visits. Parents who did not cooperate were often in disagreement with their child's placement in special education, faced serious emotional problems themselves, or actively colluded in the child's truancy. For example, one family reportedly kept a child home to work in the

family's business, another parent reportedly kept a child out of school to assist him in illegal drug dealing. Some parents who were initially uncooperative began to cooperate after being threatened with legal action.

Academic Performance

O.E.A. examined student records to determine how many students had improved in their academic performance during the program year. Data analysis indicated that over 57 percent of the students who failed at least one subject in the previous year and for whom there were complete achievement data showed an improvement in the proportion of subjects passed in 1986-87 compared to 1985-86. This outcome was above the 50 percent objective set by the Chancellor for academic performance and was considerably higher than in 1985-86.

Reasons for Leaving the Program

O.E.A. examined student records to determine participants' reasons for leaving the A.I./D.P. program prior to the completion of the academic year. Table 8 shows that reasons for leaving the program included: successfully completing the program; transferring to another school, graduating, or moving away; or being categorized as Long Term Absent (L.T.A.). It was reported that 679 students left the A.I./D.P. program. Of these, almost 47 percent were classified as long-term absent or discharged. This figure represents 13.7 percent of all program participants. Staff team G recorded nearly twice as high a percentage in this

TABLE 8
Reasons for Participants Exiting the Program
by Staff Team (in percent)

Staff Team[a]	N	Percent Exiting by Region[b]	REASONS: Completed Program[c]	Changed Schools[d]	Dropped Out: Non Attending[e]
A	402	22.6 (91)	0.5	9.0	13.2
B	390	30.3 (118)	1.5	19.7	9.0
C	366	29.8 (109)	0.3	16.4	13.1
D	255	20.0 (51)	0.8	11.4	7.8
E	292	25.5 (100)	0.3	9.9	15.3
F	148	15.5 (23)	0.7	14.9	0.0
G	379	49.3 (187)	8.6	13.5	27.2
TOTAL	2,332	29.2 (679)	2.0 (47)	13.5 (314)	13.7 (318)

Source: Student data retrieval forms.

[a]The A.I./D.P. program was implemented by seven staff teams located in five special education regions and the citywide unit. Data is reported here for each team.

[b]Total number of A.I./D.P. participants served by each staff team for whom reasons for exiting were reported.

[c]Exiting students who left the program before the end of the year, because its services were no longer needed.

[d]Exiting students who transferred to another school, graduated to high school, or moved away.

[e]Exiting students who were reported by staff to be Long Term Absent (L.T.A.) but not necessarily officially discharged from school.

- Staff team G had the highest percent of students exiting the program who were categorized as L.T.A.
- Overall, two percent of the students were determined to be no longer in need of services.
- About equal proportions of participating students changed schools and dropped out.

category than any other team. A possible explanation is that students served by staff team G did not have the same selection of high school placements available to them as students served by other teams. Students served by staff team G also had the lowest subjects-passed rate for 1985-86. These factors may have negatively affected students' motivation to stay in school.

Forty-six percent of exiting students left because they transferred to another school, graduated to high school, or moved away. This represents 13.5 percent of all A.I./D.P. students, ranging from 9.0 percent to 19.7 percent among staff teams. Almost seven percent of exiting students left because they successfully completed the A.I./D.P. program. This represents two percent of all program participants, with very little variation among staff teams.

Staff reported additional reasons why students stopped attending school. The lack of student motivation, particularly the absence of valuing school as a personal priority, was the most frequently cited reason. Other factors included not being accepted to the high school of choice, the desire to find a job and earn money, and the lack of parental cooperation. More serious factors were incarceration, pregnancy, severe family problems, substance abuse, and weapon suspensions.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objectives of the A.I./D.P. special education program were to improve the attendance and achievement rates of at-risk handicapped students attending citywide sites, intermediate and junior high schools by providing them with six basic services: facilitating services, attendance outreach, guidance and counseling, health services, school linkages, and alternative education services. In the 1986-87 program year, the special education A.I./D.P. staff operated at a total of 43 sites and worked with a population of 2,333 students. The program was implemented in the five special education regions and the citywide, low-incidence program by six full and one partial staff teams. Because of the decentralization of special education, the responsibility for the special education A.I./D.P. students in subsequent years will belong to the general education A.I./D.P. program.

IMPLEMENTATION

Conclusions based on O.E.A.'s evaluation of program implementation were:

- With the exception of one staff team, program staffing was consistent with planned program organization. There was at least one guidance counselor or social worker, a teacher trainer, and an average of six family workers in each region.
- Students who were selected for the program had the following characteristics: average age was 14.2 years; average number of days absent in the previous year was 28.3; 45 percent of students were two or more years behind in reading, and 66.5 percent of students

registered excessive absence.

- A.I./D.P. staff considered the individual needs of program participants and the availability of human resources when making service delivery decisions. They provided all six service components, but varied the frequency of services provided. This was consistent with the program mandate.

- The service combinations associated with the greatest increases in attendance were: the provision of all service components without exception (42.2 percent improvement) and the provision of all service components except school linkages (37.7 percent improvement).

OUTCOMES

Conclusions based on O.E.A.'s evaluation of student outcomes were:

- Two out of the five special education regions in effect met or surpassed the Chancellor's 50 percent attendance-improvement objective. Overall, 38 percent of A.I./D.P. full-year students entering the program by October 1986 improved their attendance from 1985-86 to 1986-87.

- Over 57 percent of A.I./D.P. students who failed at least one subject in the previous year and for whom there were complete achievement data showed improvement in the proportion of subjects passed in 1986-87 compared to 1985-86. This result surpassed the 50 percent objective set by the Chancellor for academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusions, recommendations for the future of the A.I./D.P. special education program are:

- Particular attention should continue to be paid to the way that students' handicaps affect their attendance patterns so that appropriate interventions can be made to meet their special needs.

- Incorporate the unique features of the special education A.I./D.P. program (such as the family worker's level of activity) in the general education A.I./D.P. program now that the special education students fall within their purview.

- Expand the facilitator role to a full-time position.
- Emphasize alternative special education and high school preparation, especially vocational and technical education.
- Expand efforts to involve the parents of A.I./D.P. students in program activities and to increase their skills so that they can more effectively encourage their children to increase their attendance.

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ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AND DROPOUT PREVENTION (A.I./D.P.) SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM 1986-87*

EVALUATION SUMMARY

In this report the Office of Educational Assessment (O.E.A.) evaluates the 1986-87 Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) program which was designed to provide intensive services to intermediate, junior high school and Citywide special education students identified as at risk of dropping out of school. The program operated at 43 sites in five special education regions and the Citywide services unit. The 1986-87 academic year marked the third year of the program's operation.

The report presents the characteristics of students in the program; examines the degree to which the program guidelines were implemented; analyzes attendance and academic improvement of student participants; and presents conclusions and recommendations. O.E.A. gathered data from student records and conducted interviews with all professional A.I./D.P. staff and two family workers in each region.

This is one of three reports prepared by O.E.A. evaluating the implementation of A.I./D.P. programs throughout the New York City school system. The other two reports are: "Middle School Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) Program 1986-87" and "High School Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) Program 1986-87 End of Year Report."

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The A.I./D.P. program provided services to 2,333 students with learning disabilities or behavior problems in 43 targeted middle schools and Citywide sites. Excessive absence was cited for 66.5 percent of the students as a reason for selection. Among the non-attendance-related reasons, the most frequently cited was low reading level. Forty-five percent of all students were selected because they were two or more years below grade

*This summary is based on "A Final Evaluation of the Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention (A.I./D.P.) Special Education Program 1986-87" prepared by the O.E.A. Special Education Evaluation Unit.

level in reading. Other students were eligible because of health or behavior problems.

The average age of participating students was 14.2 years; the average number of days absent in the previous year was 42.3.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program Requirements

The Chancellor's guidelines established the minimum requirements for services and set limits on the personnel and resources on which funds could be spent. The basic minimum complement of services included: a facilitation component to monitor attendance and provide referrals to community agencies; an attendance outreach component to contact parents concerning the progress of their children; a guidance and counseling component to provide services for parents and students; a health component to review students' needs and provide appropriate referrals; a school linkages component to provide high school orientations; and an alternative education component to provide work/study experiences, jobs (where possible) and the Adkins Life Skills Training.

Component Implementation

A.I./D.P. staff considered the special needs of program participants on an individual basis and the availability of human resources when making service delivery decisions. They provided all six service components in each region but varied the frequency of services provided. This practice was consistent with the program mandate.

Staffing was also consistent with the program guidelines. In all but one of the special education regions there was at least one guidance counselor or social worker, a teacher trainer, and an average of six family workers. (In the exception region, neither a guidance counselor nor a social worker was present the entire year. This factor was a consequence of system-wide personnel demands beyond the control of the A.I./D.P. program.)

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The Chancellor's Special Circular Number 25 (May 21, 1986) established performance objectives for all 1986-87 A.I./D.P. programs. Of these, the following objectives apply to the special education program:

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will have higher attendance in 1986-87 than in 1985-86.

- A minimum of 50 percent of the students provided with dropout prevention services will pass at least one more subject in 1986-87 than they did in 1985-86. (This applies only to participating students who failed one or more subjects during the previous year.)

Change in Attendance

Overall, 38 percent of A.I./D.P. students entering the program by October 1986 improved their attendance from 1985-86 to 1986-87. The mean change in percent of days attended from 1985-86 to 1986-87 was -7.0 percentage points. Two out of the five regions and Citywide in effect met the Chancellor's 50 percent attendance improvement criterion (49.4 and 54.2 percent).

The service combinations which were the most effective in improving attendance were the provision of all service components without exception (42.2 percent improvement) and the provision of all service components except school linkages (37.7 percent improvement). About 680 students left the program before the end of the academic year. Of these, 53 percent were reported to have left either because they completed the program, changed schools were discharged or listed as L.T.A.

Change in Subjects Passed

Over 57 percent of A.I./D.P. students who failed at least one subject in the previous year and for whom there were complete achievement data showed improvement in the proportion of subjects passed in 1986-87 compared to 1985-86. This result was above the 50 percent criterion set by the Chancellor for academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above outcomes and additional feedback collected from program staff, recommendations for A.I./D.P. services to special education students are:

- Particular attention should continue to be paid to the way that students' handicaps affect their attendance patterns so that appropriate interventions can be made to meet their special needs.

- Incorporate the unique features of the special education A.I./D.P. program (such as the family worker's level of activity providing facilitating and attendance outreach services) in the general education A.I./D.P. program now that the special education students fall within their purview.

- If funds permits, expand the facilitator role to a full-time position.

- Emphasize alternative special education and high school preparation, especially vocational and technical education.

- Expand efforts to involve the parents of A.I./D.P. students in program activities and to increase their skills so that they can more effectively encourage their children to increase their attendance.